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INTRODUCTION:

In India, as per census 1981, around 11 million children in the age group 5-14 are in the labour force as main workers, and another 2.21 million children participate in the labour market as marginal workers. The National Sample Survey (NSS), estimates that in 1983 over 15 million children are workers by principal status; including subsidiary status workers, the number of child labourers is over 20 million. The distribution of child labourers by location, furnished in Table 1, indicates that more than 88 per cent of the labour market participants in the age group 5-14 are in the rural area. Tamil Nadu accounts for a little over 8 per cent of the main workers, and 5.74 per cent of the total workers in the age group 5-14 in the country.

Estimates of labour force participation rates (LFPRS), based on both census and NSS data, reveal that (Tables 2a and 2b) irrespective of the source of data, the LFPRS of children are consistently high in all southern states, except Kerala, compared to the national LFPRS. It should also be mentioned here that LFPRS of females of all ages too are consistently higher in all southern states, except Kerala. Thus all southern states, except Kerala, merit attention. However Tamil Nadu has been selected for disaggregated analyses by virtue of better accessibility of data on other related factors.

At the outset, it should be pointedout that though NSS data capture LFPR of children and women better, for the major part of the analysis of this paper we relie only on census data. Census data have been preferred to NSS data as the latter do not furnish information disaggregated below the level of the state. Accordingly, we rely on census data to analyse the intra-state variability in LFPRS' of women and children and the causes thereof. This calls for assessing the consistency of census data vis-a-vis NSS data to capture the variability across space at a single point of time. Correlation co-efficients estimated between independent rankings of the states based on estimated LFPRS' of women and children using the two sources of data (census and NSS) are presented in Table 3. All the rank correlation co-efficients are above 0.75 and are significantly different from zero at 5 per cent level. This result does not confirm rank reversal across states between the two sources of data, which suggests that while there may be under-estimation of LFPRS' of women

and children by the census, the under estimation across space is consistent and does not alter the spatial pattern that obtains using the NSS data. Consequently census data could well be used to analyse the variability in LFPRS' of children and women across space at a single point of time.

It may be recalled that both LFPRS' of children and women in the rural area are high in all southern states, except Kerala. The spatial pattern that obtains for both LFPRS' of women and children prompted the examination of the relationship between their respective LFPRS'. Correlation co-efficients between LFPRS' of women and children: both male and female, presented in Table 4, are all above 0.55, and are significantly different from zero irrespective of the source of data and status of workers considered. This result suggests that atleast some of the factors underlying the labour force entry of women and children are the same.

There is a vast literature on women labour force participation, [Grown and Sebstad (1989), Standing (1989), Nagaraj (1989), Bardhan (1984)] that stresses the importance of poverty and the consequent "distress" as a major determinant of work participation of women. In this regard Standing observes that wages have fallen to such low levels that they hardly cover individual subsistence not to speak of the subsistence of the family. This necessitates the entry of women into the labour market to augment the income of the poor families. If this is so labour force entry of children too may arise out of distress. The importance of 'distress' induced by poverty as a determinant of labour force participation of children could be deduced from the works of Fyfee (1989), Weiner (1989), and Dingwaney, Dogra, Vidya Sagar and Gupta (1988). Apart from falling real wages and consequent 'distress', the importance of 'distress' arising out of inequality in the distribution of income - itself stemming from inequity in the distribution of means of production, particularly land has been stressed by several researchers, particularly Bardhan (1984) and Nagaraj (1989). Thus 'distress' arising out of poverty and the consequent struggle for survival seems to be the major determinant of the labour force participation of women and children. This paper attempts to evaluate the relavance of 'distress' as a major determinant of labour force entry of women and children, and also tries to identify the factors that contribute to 'distress'.

While poverty and the consequent struggle for survival is the common factor that determines largely the labour force entry of women and children, in the case of the women time spent on firewood collection and water carrying could be a significant factor limiting the labour force participation and the time devoted to labour market activities, Sen (1985). Hence the determinants of LFPR, for these two categories are not strictly the same.

Women and child labour force participation leads to exploitation through discrimination. It also results in employment of women and children in low paid, unskilled and low productive occupations. However, as mentioned earlier, labour force participation of women and children should be viewed differently as, in the case of women, (a) workers bear a "double burden" in as much as they

have to perform domestic functions such as child rearing, cooking, maintenance of home, firewood collection and water carrying and also directly participate in the productive process; and (b) they could benefit from economic independence and exposure to a world outside their home. As Nagaraj (1989) argues the economic participation of women provides `social knowledge and social education' which is an essential pre-requisite for social emancipation. Thus, though labour force participation of women arises out of `distress', it cannot be considered unqualifiedly undesirable.

Child labour force particpation, which also arises out of distress, and is conceived as an economic necessity for poor families, reflects social and cultural patterns - children being treated as property of parents, including that of the power relationship of adults in the family and in the work spot, Fyfee (1989). Also those children who work are deprived of their childhood and denied of their right to make their own decision, which may be conceived as slavery of children. Further, labour force particpation of children precludes school attendance leading to life time disadvantages, such as low earnings, lower levels of skill accumulation and restricted occupational mobility in the labour market. Thus 'deprivation' and the consequent ill effects of deprivation of children in the the labour market are sufficient reasons to condemn and call for eradication of child labour.

Apart from the question of the desirability or otherwise of women and child labour force participation (though in general both arise out of distress), the specific conditions of labour market participation may vary widely between women and children. For females, household work and child care are primary responsibilities and restrict both the range of occupations that could be selected and their spatial mobility. In the case of children denial of their right to make their own decision might result in their employment in occupations that are desired by their adult counter parts in the household. However, the present study is not directly concerned with this which could form another study by itself.

In this paper, an attempt is made to assess empirically the relavance of 'distress' as a major determinant of WPR's of women and children and to identify the factors that contribute to 'distress'. This is expected to offer some uses on to evolve and suggest meaningful policy measures that could be implemented. To identify the factors contributing to 'distress', we perform a disaggregated analysis - disaggregated to the level of the district, for Tamilnadu.

Method:

'Distress' - the major determinant of labour force entry of women and children, has three dimensions: (a) level of income, (b) distribution of income and (c) stability of income or earnings. Identification or classification of the three dimensions of distress yields a convenient frame work, which is more inclusive for analysing what Nagaraj, (1989) defines as *specific factors.* Given the three dimensions of distress, the relavance of distress, indices used and the rationale for using

the various indices related to the three dimensions of distress are provided in what follows.

a) **Level of Income:**

It could be easily verified from the existing literature on poverty, that poverty is a function of level of income and distribution of income. Thus level of income acquires great deal of importance as a major determinant of poverty and hence distress. In this regard several researchers such as Gulati, (1975), Dholakia and Dholakia (1978) and Sundaram (1989) have used variants of percapita income to capture the impact of level of income on labour force participation of women. It is anticipated that level of income will be inversely related to labour force participation of women and children (as level of income is inversely related to poverty and hence distress).

b) **Distribution of Income:**

The rationale for using distribution of income, as in the case of level of income, is straight forward. Distribution of income, as indicated earlier, is the other major determinant of poverty and hence distress. it is anticipated that given a certain level of income, the inequality in the distribution determines the extent of poverty. Simply put, other things, particularly level of income remaining the same, higher inequality in the distribution of income implies higher incidence of poverty and hence higher degree of distress. For this reason, it is anticipated that inequality in the distribution of income to be directly related to extent of labour force participation of women and children.

c) **Instability in Earnings:**

Instability in earnings or income, is not as self evident as the other two factors as determinants of 'distress'. In this regard, it may be pointed out that while several researchers have explicitly recognised the importance of level of income and distribution of income - the major determinants of poverty -they have not incorporated instability as a determinant of distress in their frame work. Instability in earnings or income could be conceived of as a proxy for uncertainty in employment and earnings. Given that commitments to expenditure have to be continuously met, instability in earnings or uncertain income, particularly at low levels of income, could contribute substantially to distress.

In predominantly agrarian economy instability in earnings is largely a function of instability in agriculture. In such circumstances, where agriculture is more unstable and earnings more uncertain, the compulsion of survival is likely to make household use all available resources, including female

and child labour, to secure a subsistence income. For these reasons, it is anticipated that instability in agriculture will be directly related to labour force participation of women and children. Given the rationale for including the three dimensions of distress in the framework of analysis, the various indices that would be used and the the rationale for using the various indices will be provided in the next section.

Selected Indices:

At the outset, we acknowledge the fact that there are no data available to represent directly the three dimensions of distress just discussed. Hence, as is normally done in any emprical research, we resort to indirect indices of 'distress' - in the light of the three dimensions described earlier. The value of agricultural output per head of rural population and value of agricultural output per agricultural worker are assumed to be reasonably good proxies for the level of per capita rural income. However, it should be pointed out that neither agricultural output per capita of rural population nor agricultural output per agricultural worker is a complete index of level of income in the rural area. These indices are incomplete as they do not capture the income generated in the rural non-agricultural sector. Given data limitations and non-availability of data on either standard of living in the rural area or on income generated in the rural non-agricutlural sector at the desired level of disaggregation, the crop output per head of rural population and the rural agricultural worker are the best considerable indices of level of income across districts in the rural area. In this connection it may be pointed out that Gulati (1975) using percapita income and Sundaram (1989) using agricultural output per agricultural worker, have analysed the impact of level of income on LFPRS of women. Since poverty and hence 'distress' is inversely related to income, LFPRS of women and children are expected to be inversely related to the proxies considered in the analysis.

Percentage of landless households to total rural households, ratio of agricultural labourers to cultivators and percentage of households who own less than or equal to 1 hectare are used as proxies for income distribution. Landlessness in rural area is synonymous with rural poverty. In this regard Rosenzweig (1984) and Nagaraj (1989) have analysed the impact of landlessness on LFPRS of women. Rosenzweig has used percentage of landless households to total households, while Nagaraj has used the incidence of agricultural labourers in the total work force as an index of economic differentiation and pauperisation. In a land based rural economy, where land is the major source of livelihood, access to this means of production and distribution of this means of production assume a great deal of importance. The extreme case of landlessness is particularly emphasized, as land apart from being the major source of livelihood - is seen as a symbol of social status. Hence, land ownership per se will reduce the WPR of women and children, although those who are close to the lowest stratum of land owned may not earn enough from the land to subsist. Thus landlessness has been given prime importance among indices constructed to capture the impact of income distribution. To this end two indices namely percentage of landless households

to total households and ratio of agricultural labourers to cultivators are used in the analysis. Percentag of households who own less than or equal to 1 hectare, is used as an index of distribution of land and hence income. Given the availability of land to be more or less the same across districts, the greater the percentage of holdings in the size class less than or equal to 1 hectare, more equitable is the distribution of land among land owners. For reasons indicated earlier, the indices of landlessness are expected to be directly related to LFPRs of women and children, while the index of distribution - as defined, is expected to be inversely related to LFPRS of women and children.

Percentage of gross cropped area irrigated, cropping intensity and percentage of gross cropped area under inferior creals are used as proxies for stability or otherwise of agriculture across districts. The first two indices - percentage of gross cropped area irrigated and cropping intensity, capture the intra-district and inter-seasonal stability in labour use respectively. Simply put, greater the percentage of gross cropped area irrigated, more homogeneous will be the labour demand and productivity per unit of gross cropped area. On the other hand, if irrigation is not evenly spread, there will be pockets where the agriculture is purely monsoon dependent: in such pockets labour demand and productivity might be expected to be relatively unstable. Percentage of gross cropped area irrigated is used to capture the extent of such unstable pockets and extent of workers depending on low and unstable income. Similarly, wherever cropping intensity is high, one would expect a more stable demand for labour across agricultural seasons within a year. Thus, these two indices - directly related to stability and hence inversely to 'distress' and therefore to LFPRS of women and children - are incorporated into the analysis.

A high proportion of gross cropped area accounted for by inferior cereals could be taken to be an indicator of an extremely poor and unstable agrarian economy. Labour demand and productivity per unit of gross cropped area of inferior cereals will be very low and unstable. Thus this index is directly related to distress and to LFPRS of women and children for reasons stated earlier.

Apart from these indices that are either directly or inversely related to 'distress' and hence to LFPRS of women and children, sociological factors, particularly social deprivation as a determinant of LFPRS of women, have been stressed by several researchers notably, by Nagaraj (1989). To analyse the impact of social deprivation, we include the index: percentage of schedule caste population as an additional variable. As this section of the population is both resource - and income-poor, we expect this index to be directly related to LFPRS of women and children across districts.

Background to the problem:

As a prelude to the analysis of the extent and variability in the labour force participation rates of women and children across districts, we provide the distribution of both a) the absolute

number and b) percentage share of women and children who are main workers in each distr to total women and children, who are main workers in rural Tamil Nadu, in Table 5. This tabl reveals that each one of the districts: North Arcot, Salem and Madurai accounts for more than 10 per cent of the total child labourers who are main workers in the state. South Arcot and Dharmapuri districts respectively account for 8.88 and 8.62 percent of the child labourers in the state. In this context, it is surprising to note that child labour in Ramanathapuram district particularly in Sivakasi, a small town in the afore- mentioned district, has attracted the attention of both researchers and policy makers. But the problem remains largely neglected in other districts, particularly the problem of rural child labour. It may be that children in Ramanathapuram district are employed in a particular place - Sivakasi, and in a particular industry - match industry, while in other districts child labourers are rather widely diffused both spatially and across industries. Areas exhibiting spatial and occupational concentration have tended, somewhat exclusively to attract the attention of both researchers and policy makers.

Distribution of women workers across districts in the state reveals that Madurai (11.84 per cent) accounts for the largest share of women workforce. The other important districts where women workforce is concentrated are North Arcot, South Arcot, Salem and Tirunelveli with respective shares of 9.50, 9.18, 9.13 and 9.01 percent.

Table 6 presents the share of child labourers in the age group 5-14 in (a) main workforce and (b) total workforce (i.e.) main workers and main and marginal workers of respective genders in various districts. It can be observed, that the share of child labourers in the total workforce is the highest in Dharmapuri district, and is very high in districts such as Salem, Coimbatore, Periyar and Madurai where the share is more than 6 percent of the total workforce in the respective districts. It may be noted that in districts such as Periyar and Coimbatore, where the agricultural sector is relatively more prosperous, the share of child labourers in the total workforce is relatively high. It may also be noted that in these districts the work participation rate of women too is high, which calls for examining the inter-relationship between labour force participation of women and children.

Correlation co-efficients estimated between labour force participation rates of women and children, presented in Table 7, for a) accounting only main workers and b) accounting for both main and marginal workers are all above 0.58 and are significantly different from zero at 5% level. As noted elsewhere, the results support the notion that both labour force participation of women and children arises out of a common set of factor - 'distress' related factors. In this connection, the results obtained for Coimbatore and Periyar districts are particularly interesting; they suggest that 'distress' not only arises out of level of income or general level of prosperity but distribution and instability, may also be important. Given the preliminary background to the problem, the next section is devoted to an analysis of inter-district variability in the labour force participation rate of children and women and the causes thereof.

Distress and Child/Female Labour Force Participation:

The discussion in the preceeding section sets the ground for analysing the observed variation in the LFPRS' of women and children across districts. As indicated earlier, there is sufficient evidence to the effect that survival necessitates labour force participation of women and children, particularly children. In this connection, if one adheres to the view that general level of prosperity or level of income is the prime factor that determines the extent of poverty and hence 'distress' and LFPRS' of women and children, one would expect a strong inverse relationship between level of income and LFPRS' of women and children. To this end, as indicated earlier, two indices of level of income: agricultural output per agricultural worker and agricultural output per rural population are employed. In order to evaluate the 'a priori' expectation, the districts have been grouped into three categories: a) high income, b) medium income and c) low income, groups of districts independently using both the indices of level of income. Districts, where agricultural output per agricultural worker is a) greater than or equal to Rs.2000 b) greater than Rs.1500 but less than Rs.2000 and c) less than Rs.1500 are grouped respectively as high, medium and low income groups of districts. On the other hand, districts where agricultural output per rural population is a) greater than Rs.700, b) greater than Rs.500 but less than Rs.700 and c) less than Rs.500 are classified respectively as high, medium and low income groups of districts. Thus we have obtained two sets of classification of districts based on the indices used. Districts such as, a) Thanjavur, Chengalpattu, Periyar, South Arcot and North Arcot b) Coimbatore, Salem, Madurai, Pudukkottai and Tirunelveli and c) Tiruchirapalli, Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram, respectively constitute the high, medium and low income groups of districts, if agricultural output per agricultural worker is used for classification. On the other hand, if agricultural output per rural population is used for classification of districts a) North Arcot, South Arcot, Periyar, Coimbatore and Thanjavur b) Chengalpattu, Salem, Madurai, Pudukkottai and Tiruchirapalli and c) Tirunelveli, Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram respectively constitute high, medium and low income groups of districts. Given the two independent sets of groupings of districts, the results are presented accordingly in Tables 8a and 8b.

As a pre requisite for the analysis of the level of LFPRS of women and children across districts, the 'a priori' expectations are speltout clearly. We believe that two: a) strong and b) weak, versions of the 'a priori' expectations could be formulated for testing. The weak version of the expectation, as is conceived, requires that the simple averages of the LFPRS of women and children will be a) the lowest for the first group b) low for the second group and c) the highest for third group, of districts irrespective of the indices used for grouping the districts. The strong version of the expectation, however, requires that LFPRS of women and children in each one of the districts in the first group will be lower than that of districts in the second group and that of districts in the second group will be lower than that of districts in the third group.

Labour force participation rates of women and children estimated: a excluding marginal workers and b) including marginal workers, are presented in Tables 8a and 8b accordingly for the two sets of groups of districts. From these tables, it could be observed that the weak version of the

'a priori' expectation is weakly confirmed by the results. The results are weak as: a) when we adopt agricultural output per agricultural worker for grouping the districts, the simple averages of LFPRS of women and children are the lowest for the first group, while the same are not the highest for the third group as expected. However the difference in the absolute values of the simple averages between the second and third groups do not differ markedly, except for the simple averages of LFPRS of women. b) When value of agricultural output per rural population is used for grouping the districts, comparison of the simple averages of LFPRS' between second and third group confirm the 'a priori' expectation, while the comparison of first and second do not confirm the expectation. And hence, we conclude that the weak version of the 'a priori' expectation is weakly confirmed. The results also indicate that the strong version of the 'a priori' expectation is not confirmed.

As it is evident, the hypothesis that level of income is the major determinant of the extent of absolute poverty and hence the extent of 'distress' is not adequately supported by the results of the analysis. We stress this result as it indicates the fallacy in excessive reliance on increasing the level of income or general level of prosperity to eradicate poverty and hence distress. If the dubious importance is accorded, as is generally done, to the level of income, growth in income and trickle down in income as a means of eradicating poverty and hence distress will be given undue weight in policy making, and the importance of distribution of income and stability in income or earnings will be neglected. Given these results, the need arises to unearth the importance of the other two dimensions of distress.

As pointed out earlier, we have six indices, three: percentage of households landless, percentage of holdings with less than or equal to 1.0 hectare and ratio of agricultural labourers to cultivators to capture the impact of income distribution, particularly distribution of income from land, and three: cropping intensity, percentage of gross cropped are irrigated and percentage of gross cropped area devoted inferior to cereals, to capture the impact of instability in earnings that arises out of instability in agriculture. It will be extremely difficult to analyse the LFPRS' of women and children with respect to each one of these indices. And hence, we group the districts based on LFPRS' of women and children into two as districts reporting, a) high and b) low, LFPRS of women and children, particularly children with respect to that of the state. Districts such as North Arcot, Periyar, Coimbator, Salem, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram constitute the first group as the LFPRS of women and children are higher than that of the state, while districts such as Chengalpattu, South Arcot, Pudukkottai, Tiruchirapalli and Thanjavur, where LFPRS of women and children are lower than that of the state form the second group. Agrarian characteristics that are common to districts in each one of the groups are identified and contrasted with those of the other group to bring out the importance of the various factors. To identify the common charecteristics simple averages or arithmatic means of different indices for all districts are computed and the

actual values of the various indices for each one of the districts are compared with their respective means.

At the outset, it should be mentioned that one of the indices of landlessness, ratio of agricultural labourers to cultivators, has been discarded as the index does not bear any consistent relationship with LFPRS of women and children. This may be, because the incidence of agricultural labourers is determined by, apart from landlessness, productivity and cropping pattern in different districts. To be more precise, four of the eight districts in the first group have lower incidence of agricultural labourers, particularly, Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram. In these two districts the general level of prosperity or income is extremely low. It appears from the result that in such a situation instability in itself may be sufficient to generate labour force participation of children. On the contrary, Chengalpattu and Thanjavur in the second group reveal higher incidence of agricultural labourers and also landlessness, but in these two districts general level of income or prosperity is high and the availability of irrigation facilities is also extremely high. Thus the cases of Thanjavur and Chengalpattu support the notion that with fairly high level of income, stability in agriculture and hence earnings or income may be suficient to reduce the labour force participation of women and children. Given the specific cases, we concentrate on the more general results.

It could be easily verified from table 9, that five out of eight districts in the first group report a) higher incidence of landlessness b) lower percentage of holdings in the size class less than or equal to 1.0 hectare or higher inequality in the distribution of land and hence income from land and c) higher incidence of inferior cereals in the gross cropped area. And also, 75 percent and 87.5 percent of the districts in the first group exihibit relatively lower extent of gross cropped area irrigated and cropping intensity respectively. These results indicate that in more than 60 percent of the districts in the first group, where the LFPRS of women and children are relatively high, inequality in the distribution of income and instability in earnings are relatively high. These results, in other words, imply that LFPRS of women and children are largely determined by inequality and instability in earnings or income. Similarly, the common agrarian characteristics that obtain for the second group too support the notion that inequality and instability in income are the major determinants of labour force participation of women and children. Districts in the second group, where the LFPRS of women and children are lower, 60 percent exhibit relatively lower incidence of landlessness and higher cropping intensity, 80 percent higher extent of gross cropped area irrigated and lower percentage of area under inferior cereals and all the districts have higher percentage of holdings in the size class of less than or equal to 1.0 hectare. Thus more than 60 percent of the districts in the second group report relatively low inequality in the distribution of income and instability in earnings. These results signify the importance of instability in earnings and inequality in the distribution of income as determinants of LFPRS of women and children.

It has been indicated earlier that apart from 'distress', the sociological factor captured by the percentage of schedule caste population in the total population of the districts has been incorporated into the analysis to identify the importance of social deprivation on labour force participation of

women and children. We have included this index as schedule castes are placed at the lowest end of the social hierarchy, and also are economically deprived. They are both resource and income poor, and thus poverty is highest among them. For these reasons we expect a positive relationship between percentage of schedule caste population in the total population of districts and LFPRS of women and children across districts. On this 'a priori' expectation the percentage of schedule caste population and LFPRS of women and children is analysed.

On relating column 10 of table 10 and the various columns of table 9, it could be verified that in all eight districts where LFPRS of women and children are higher than that of the state, percentage of schedule caste population is lower than that of the state, though the difference is only marginal in some districts. Similarly, in 4 of the five districts where LFPRS of women and children are lower than that of the state, percentage of schedule caste population is higher than that of the state. This result at first sight contradicts the 'a priori' expectation. However, further reasoning suggests that the results observed may be due to complex interaction of 'distress' and the sociological factors. It may be that in different agrarian regimes with different levels of inequality and instability the caste differences may vary a great deal, (Nagaraj, (1989). In this regard we hypothesise that a) LFPRS of women and children of schedule caste will be consistently higher in all districts compared to that of non-schedule caste, other than schedule tribe. b) the differences in LFPRS of women and children of schedule caste and other castes, excluding schedule tribe, will be lower in poor and unstable agrarian regimes, given the land distribution. In other words, other things, particularly land distribution remaining the same, caste differences or the impact of caste on LFPRS of women and children will be weak in poor and unstable agrarian regime and c) caste differences will be higher in more prosperous and stable agrarian regimes.

In order to assess the validity of the hypotheses speltout in the preceeding paragraph, a) LFPRS of women and children of schedule caste and ii) other castes* excluding schedule tribe, have been estimated and the differences are expressed as percentage of the LFPRS of women and children of other caste. Estimated results are presented in Tables 11 and 12, and the estimates reveal that the LFPRS of women and children are consistently higher in all districts for the deprived caste, considered in the analysis, compared to that of the other castes. However, the hypotheses relating to caste differences require to be carefully evaluated. In the case of LFPRS of women (Table 11) the results are fairly straight forward. In all the districts, except Thanjavur, Chengalpattu, South Arcot and Tiruchirapalli, (where Tiruchirapalli is an exception) the percentage difference in LFPRS of women of schedule caste is lower than that of the state, particularly in Dharmapuri, Ramanathapuram, Madurai and Salem. The results of Thanjavur onthe one hand and that of Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram on the other, beyond doubt confirms the 'a priori' expectation that the impact of social deprivation will be weak in poor and unstable agrarian regime compared to that in a prosperous and stable agrarian regime. In Thanjavur, where the agriculture is prosperous and extremely stable compared to other districts the index of caste differences of LFPRS of women is around 200, while in Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram, it is less than 30 percent.

* We refer to all caste other than schedule caste and schedule tribe.

In the case of children, the results suggest a) the index of caste differences in general is higher for females compared to that for males b) the caste differences seem to be largely reinforced by landlessness and land distribution for males, while for females all three dimensions of distress, particularly stability reinforce caste differnces. In districts such as Thanjavur and Chengalpattu, where agriculture is more prosperous and stable, the index of the caste difference for male children is only as high as in Ramanathapuram, while the same is very high in Coimbatore and Periyar, particularly in Coimbatore where the extent of landlessness is the highest and also the share of near landless holdings is the lowest. This result signifies the importance of landlessness and inequality in the distribution of land as reinforcing the caste differences. For female children, once again the results indicate that as in the case of women, the caste difference is the highest in Thanjavur and second highest in South Arcot districts. But the index of caste difference for female children is also high in Periyar and Coimbatore, particularly in Coimbatore. It may be that while distress arising out of instability and income: the level of income, reduces the caste differences, landlessness and land distribution reinforces the caste differences. However, the difference in the results of male and female children can not be completely explained. The old age security motive and raising the present income for survival may have different impact on schooling of male and female children and hence on LFPRS of male and female children, which might affect the caste differences. An hypotheses, which could only be tested at much more disaggregated level, household level, but not at the level of disaggregation employed in the analysis of the present paper. Given these results the concluding observations are made in the next section.

Concluding Observations:

The analysis in the paper, though far from sophisticated, offers valuable insights for understanding the determinants of LFPRS of women and children. The cases of Coimbatore and Periyar on the one hand and Pudukkottai on the other establish beyond doubt that, the distribution of income, the inequality that arises out of landlessness and land distribution, and instability in agriculture and the consequent instability in earnings are the important factors that determine the LFPRS of women and children. This inference is substantiated by the fact that in districts such as North Arcot, Coimbatore and Periyar, despite the level of income in the agricultural sector being higher, the LFPRS of both women and children are very high, particularly in the latter two districts. Given this result, and the result stressed earlier that other things, particularly land distribution and landlessness remaining the same, stability in agriculture reinforces social deprivation, one ends up with a *radical land reform* measure as a solution to reducing 'distress' and caste differences. The call for radical land reform measure derives its strength further, from the fact that in Chengalpattu, where agriculture is as stable as in Thanjavur and landlessness as high as in Thanjavur, the caste differences on LFPRS of women and children particularly for women and female children, are much lower in Chengalpattu compared to Thanjavur. The difference in the results, as could be deduced, largely arises out of the differences in land distribution. Given the availability of gross cropped area per head of rural population to be more or less the same at 0.21 and 0.29 hectare respectively in

Chengalpattu and Thanjavur, percentage of holdings in the smallest size class of holdings in the former, 62.44 percent is much higher compared to that of the latter, 48.72. Thus, given the level of income and stability in agriculture, land distribution seems to be the major determinant of caste difference, which strengthens our claim for land redistribution to reduce distress and social deprivation.

The inference that radical land reform measure will serve as the best suited policy to eradicate distress and the impact of social deprivation could be further valadiated. In a land based economy where land ownership confers social status, land ownership acts a constraint to exploiting child labour as a survival strategy by the land owning households, though they may not earn enough for subsistence from land. Further, along with land redistribution provision or extension of irrigation facilities and enhancing productivity of land and stabilising agriculture will assure minimum subsistence. Subsistence, when assured, would help the labour market entrants to react to the extremely low levels of wages and bad working conditions. In other words, the objective condition for labour force entry of women and children being absolute poverty and the consequent struggle for survival, which makes them tolerant to humiliation and exploitation, assuring subsistence by land redistribution and extension of irrigation facilities would reduce poverty and help them to retaliate to exploitative labour market conditions as losing employment and wages in the short run is not going to leave them starving.

In this connection, the observation made by Weiner (1989) is worth recalling. He observes that the labour union at Sivakasi is not for banning the child labour in the match industry as most of the union members want their children to work in the match industry. The motivation for not banning the child labour has borne out the consideration for subsistence or survival. They look at child labour as a source of enhancing the present income, as the earnings of adults are not sufficient for subsistence of the family, and hence as survival strategy and not as apprenticeship and as means of upward mobility in the labour market. This survival strategy paves the way for exploitation of child labour. This observation is substantiated by Dingwaney, Dogra, Vidyasagar and Gupta (1988), who point out that child labourers are treated as sweat labour and that as childhood is lost, they are thrown out of employment from the match industry. And since their accumulated skills do not find a market, as a survival strategy get employed in low paid occupations outside the industry, particularly in agriculture. And as their earnings from the new occupation are not sufficient for subsistence of the entire family, they send their children to work in the match industry. Thus, despite their own experience of hardships and humiliation, the past child labourers supply the present child labourers to the match industry. In such circumstances, the fear of starvation forces the union members, who themselves are low paid workers in the industry, not to fight for banning child labour in the industry. The discussion, apart from indicating the importance of poverty as a determinant of labour force entry of children, also indicates the process by which the vicious circle of poverty and hence child labour perpetuates. In a land based or predominently agrarian economy such as ours, to break the vicious circle of poverty by appropriate policy intervention in the form of radical land reform measure seems to be extremely meaningful.

However, it should not be misconceived that we undermine the importance of the other factors, particularly stability in agriculture. As indicated earlier, given the land distribution stabilising agriculture would reinforce the social deprivation or caste differences, as the inequality in income distribution would increase. In this context as indicated earlier, the deprived caste; schedule caste, are both resource poor and income poor and that stabilising productivity and income from land without land redistribution will widen the caste differences. And hence, a package of policy measures must be evolved of which land redistribution should be the most important component.

The scope of the paper being limited, the issues relating to nature of child labour and the qualititative differences in male and female child labour have not been addressed here. And also, issues regarding demand side of child labour have not been analysed. However, the demand side issues which are closely related to nature of child labour and gender differences in child labour might form a study by itself. Given these

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Table No.1

Number and Percentage Distribution of Workers in the Age Group 5-14, by Location (in 000's)

Source of Data	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Census 1981						
a) Main Workers	6696	3505	10201	739	252	991
	(90.06)	(93.29)	(91.15)	(9.94)	(6.71)	(8.85)
b) Main and	7340	5872	13212	770	322	1092
Marginal Workers	(90.50)	(94.80)	(92.37)	(9.50)	(5.20)	(7.63)
NSS 1983						
a) Principal	8434	5903	14337	1049	558	1607
Status Workers	(88.94)	(91.36)	(89.92)	(11.06)	(8.64)	(10.08)
b) Principal						
and subsidiary	10130	8327	18457	1280	719	1999
Status Workers	(88.78)	(92.05)	(90.23)	(11.22)	(7.95)	(9.77)

Source: (1) NSS, Report on the Third Quinquennial Survey on Employment and Unemployment (January-December 1983), Department of Statistics, New Delhi, No 341, November 1987.

(2) Census of India, 1981, Part-IVa, Social and Cultural Tables, (Tables C-1 to C-6).

Table No. 2a

Labour Force Participation of Children and Women, NSS 1983 (Rural)

	State	Children 5-14				Women	
		Principal Status		Principal and Subsidiary Status		Principal Status	Principal and Subsidiary Status
		Male	Female	Male	Female		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	23.16	18.06	24.17	20.43	47.91	54.37
2.	Bihar	7.51	4.71	8.95	7.93	18.92	28.97
3.	Gujarat	8.50	8.78	11.11	12.30	37.35	46.68
4.	Haryana	5.80	5.24	7.68	9.72	15.61	27.50
5.	Karnataka	19.17	14.52	20.65	17.78	35.93	45.03
6.	Kerala	1.85	1.21	3.43	3.09	19.34	35.00
7.	Madhya Pradesh	13.95	11.70	15.40	14.73	43.94	50.87
8.	Maharashtra	12.41	13.39	15.00	16.17	49.11	54.42
9.	Orissa	15.26	10.46	16.09	13.22	25.97	33.43
10.	Punjab	13.54	1.35	20.85	9.78	4.69	36.52
11.	Rajasthan	13.65	20.21	17.64	27.05	39.69	54.56
12.	Tamilnadu	14.04	14.63	15.44	17.72	42.23	51.42
13.	Uttar Pradesh	8.62	4.49	12.15	8.98	17.26	30.10
14.	West Bengal	8.70	2.05	10.87	5.26	10.34	22.16
	India	11.27	8.84	13.54	12.48	28.73	39.30

Source: NSS, Report on the Third Quinquennial Survey on Employment and Unemployment (January-December 1983), Department of Statistics, New Delhi, No.341, November 1987.

Table No. 2b

Labour Force Participation of Children and Women, Census 1981

	State	Children 5-14				Women	
		Main Workers		Main and Marginal Workers		Main Workers	Main and Marginal Workers
		Male	Female	Male	Female		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16.66	12.92	17.38	15.71	31.95	40.03
2.	Bihar	6.92	2.58	7.69	4.21	9.70	14.65
3.	Gujarat	8.45	4.37	9.38	8.32	13.46	26.85
4.	Haryana	6.61	1.90	7.44	4.63	4.88	12.29
5.	Karnataka	14.47	8.76	15.32	12.21	22.27	30.66
6.	Kerala	1.14	1.11	1.59	1.55	13.47	17.72
7.	Madhya Pradesh	12.83	9.50	14.23	13.67	25.78	35.78
8.	Maharashtra	10.70	9.90	11.18	10.09	31.39	40.85
9.	Orissa	11.29	3.70	12.75	7.86	11.07	21.09
10.	Punjab	9.01	0.46	9.50	2.40	3.71	6.90
11.	Rajasthan	8.94	4.98	10.19	9.71	10.59	24.99
12.	Tamilnadu	10.14	8.51	10.78	10.40	27.85	33.35
13.	Uttar Pradesh	6.74	1.58	7.13	2.52	5.90	9.04
14.	West Bengal	6.56	1.34	7.12	2.00	6.19	8.89
	India	9.17	5.22	10.05	8.75	16.00	23.20

Source: 1) Census of India 1981, Part IV-A Social and Cultural Tables (Tables C-1 to C-6).

2) Census of India, 1981, Part II B(i), Primary Census Abstract: General Population.

Table No.3

Correlation Co-efficients between Rankings of States by LFPRS of Census 1981 and NSS 1983

Status of Workers	Children 5-14		Women
	Male	Female	
Main and Principal Status Workers	0.91	0.88	0.91
Total (Main + Marginal) and Principal and Subsidiary Status Workers	0.79	0.87	0.79

Table No.4

Correlation Co-efficients between LFPRS of Women and Children

Source of Data	Children 5 - 14	
	Male	Female
Census 1981		
Main Workers	0.68 (0.77)	0.91 (0.94)
Main and Marginal Workers	0.65 (0.77)	0.95 (0.97)
NSS 1983		
Principal Status Workers	0.56 (0.55)	0.87 (0.88)
Principal and Subsidiary Status Workers	0.57 (0.59)	0.82 (0.85)

Note: Figures in parantheses are correlation co-efficients estimated omitting Kerala.

Table No.5

Number and Percentage Distribution of Women and Child Labour* Across Districts of Tamilnadu, 1981

Category of Labour/ State/District**	Child Labour			Women
	Male	Female	Total	
1. Chengalpattu	22408	15270	37678	237785
	(5.59)	(4.70)	(5.14)	(5.30)
2. North Arcot	46886	32034	78920	426541
	(11.70)	(9.85)	(10.87)	(9.50)
3. South Arcot	39663	24823	64486	412028
	(9.90)	(7.63)	(8.88)	(9.18)
4. Dharmapuri	39594	24443	64037	227264
	(9.88)	(7.52)	(8.82)	(5.06)
5. Salem	39926	33736	73662	410218
	(9.97)	(10.37)	(10.15)	(9.13)
6. Periyar	26561	24572	51133	293372
	(6.63)	(7.56)	(7.04)	(6.53)
7. Coimbatore	26025	24483	50508	282786
	(6.50)	(7.53)	(6.96)	(6.30)
8. Madurai	42910	41348	84258	531588
	(10.71)	(12.72)	(11.61)	(11.84)
9. Tiruchirapalli	28631	23910	52541	394249
	(7.15)	(7.35)	(7.24)	(8.88)
10. Thanjavur	20821	11382	32203	312826
	(5.20)	(3.50)	(4.44)	(6.97)
11. Pudukkottai	10204	6611	16815	99441
	(2.55)	(2.03)	(2.32)	(2.21)
12. Ramanathapuram	27525	28562	56087	366730
	(6.87)	(8.78)	(7.23)	(8.17)
13. Tirunelveli	24350	30362	54712	404623
	(6.08)	(9.34)	(7.54)	(9.01)
Tamilnadu	400625	325189	725814	4490643

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A Social and Cultural Tables for Tamilnadu.
2) Census of India, 1981, Part II-B, Primary Census Abstract for Tamil Nadu.

Labour includes only main workers

We have excluded Kanyakumari district as the cropping and settlement patterns are different.

Table No.6

Share of Workers in the Age Group 5-14 in the Total Workforce of Districts, 1981

Category of Labour/ State/District		Main Workers			Main and Marginal Workers		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.	Chengalpattu	3.60	6.42	4.38	3.86	6.68	4.77
2.	North Arcot	7.77	7.51	5.60	5.00	7.78	5.96
3.	South Arcot	3.88	6.02	4.50	4.18	6.46	4.95
4.	Dharmapuri	7.23	10.76	8.27	7.49	10.88	8.62
5.	Salem	5.08	8.22	6.16	5.21	8.19	6.33
6.	Periyar	4.76	8.38	6.01	4.84	8.21	6.09
7.	Coimbatore	5.13	8.66	6.40	5.23	8.59	6.49
8.	Madurai	4.95	7.78	6.02	5.13	8.01	6.29
9.	Tiruchirapalli	3.56	6.06	4.38	3.77	6.41	4.75
10.	Thanjavur	2.32	3.64	2.66	2.49	3.79	2.89
11.	Pudukkottai	3.66	6.65	4.45	4.02	6.89	5.00
12.	Ramanathapuram	4.15	7.79	5.45	4.43	7.81	5.81
13.	Tirunelveli	3.85	7.50	5.28	4.00	7.51	5.47
	Tamilnadu	4.20	7.24	5.17	4.40	7.35	5.46

Source: Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A Social and Cultural Tables for Tamil Nadu.

Table No.7

Correlation Co-efficients between LFPRS of Women and Children Across Districts

Child Labour/ Category of Workers	Male	Female	Total
a) Main Workers	0.60	0.92	0.80
b) Main and Marginal Workers	0.58	0.91	0.79

Table No. 8a

LFPRS of Children and Women Across Groups of Districts by Value of Agricultural Output Per Agricultural Worker, 1981

Category of Workers/ Districts/Group	Main Workers				Main and Marginal Workers			
	Children 5-14			Women	Children 5-14			Women
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Group 1								
Chengalpattu	8.17	5.69	6.94	21.82	9.00	7.52	8.27	27.75
North Arcot	11.07	7.70	9.40	25.36	11.82	10.08	10.96	32.26
South Arcot	8.94	5.79	7.93	23.57	9.80	7.27	8.90	30.25
Periyar	15.61	14.91	15.26	37.13	15.93	16.47	16.20	41.84
Thanjavur	5.62	3.16	4.41	20.13	6.16	4.16	5.17	25.37
Mean	9.88	7.45	8.79	25.60	10.54	9.10	9.90	31.49
C.V.	33.93	53.68	41.21	23.52	30.82	45.45	36.93	18.00
Group 2								
Coimbatore	15.51	14.96	15.24	37.94	15.88	16.04	15.95	40.94
Salem	13.87	12.67	13.29	32.67	14.34	14.74	14.53	40.24
Madurai	11.86	11.87	11.86	37.04	12.42	13.55	12.97	41.08
Pudukkottai	7.93	5.35	6.66	19.71	8.92	8.25	8.59	29.41
Tirunelveli	8.36	10.79	9.55	33.67	8.82	12.30	10.53	38.36
Mean	11.51	11.13	11.32	32.21	12.08	12.98	12.51	38.01
C.V.	25.91	28.73	26.32	20.35	23.50	20.57	21.27	11.59
Group 3								
Tiruchirapalli	9.21	7.97	8.60	29.63	9.88	10.25	10.06	36.06
Dharmapuri	16.29	10.28	13.32	25.63	17.04	12.87	14.87	31.20
Ramanathapuram	9.39	10.00	9.69	30.08	10.20	12.77	11.47	38.34
Mean	11.63	9.42	10.54	28.45	12.37	11.96	12.13	35.20
C.V.	28.34	10.93	19.15	7.03	26.69	10.13	16.64	8.46

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A, Social and Cultural Tables for Tamil Nadu.

2) Census of India, 1981, Part II-B, Primary Census Abstract for Tamil Nadu.

Table No. 8b

LFPRS of Children and Women Across Groups of Districts by Value of Agricultural Output Per Rural Population, 1981

Category of Workers/ Districts/Group	Main Workers				Main and Marginal Workers			
	Children 5-14			Women	Children 5-14			Women
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Group 1								
North Arcot	11.07	7.70	9.40	25.36	11.82	10.08	10.96	32.26
South Arcot	8.94	5.79	7.93	23.57	9.80	7.27	8.90	30.25
Periyar	15.61	14.91	15.26	37.13	15.93	16.47	16.20	41.84
Coimbatore	15.51	14.96	15.24	37.94	15.88	16.04	15.95	40.94
Thanjavur	5.62	3.16	4.41	20.13	6.16	4.16	5.17	25.37
Mean	11.35	9.30	10.45	28.83	11.92	10.80	11.44	34.13
C.V.	33.93	51.79	40.61	25.36	31.27	44.71	36.89	18.58
Group 2								
Chengalpattu	8.17	5.69	6.94	21.82	9.00	7.52	8.27	27.75
Salem	13.87	12.67	13.29	32.67	14.34	14.74	14.53	40.24
Madurai	11.86	11.87	11.86	37.04	12.42	13.55	12.97	41.08
Pudukkottai	7.93	5.35	6.66	19.71	8.92	8.25	8.59	29.41
Tiruchirapalli	9.21	7.97	8.60	29.63	9.88	10.25	10.06	36.06
Mean	10.21	8.71	9.47	28.17	10.91	10.86	10.88	34.91
C.V.	22.54	35.06	28.08	23.16	19.53	26.24	22.66	15.65
Group 3								
Tirunelveli	8.36	10.79	9.55	33.67	8.82	12.30	10.53	38.36
Dharmapuri	16.29	10.28	13.32	25.63	17.04	12.87	14.87	31.20
Ramanathapuram	9.39	10.00	9.69	30.08	10.20	12.77	11.47	38.34
Mean	11.35	10.36	10.85	29.79	12.02	12.65	12.29	35.97
C.V.	31.03	3.16	16.08	11.04	29.90	1.96	15.17	9.37

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A, Social and Cultural Tables for Tamil Nadu.
2) Census of India 1981, Part II-B, Primary Census Abstract for Tamil Nadu.

Table No.9

LFPRS of Women and Children Across Districts, 1981

Category of Workers/ Districts/State		Main Workers				Main and Marginal Workers			
		Children 5-14			Women	Children 5-14			Women
		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
1.	Chengalpattu	8.17	5.69	6.94	21.82	9.00	7.52	8.27	27.75
2.	North Arcot	11.07	7.70	9.40	25.36	11.82	10.08	10.96	32.26
3.	South Arcot	8.94	5.79	7.93	23.57	9.80	7.27	8.90	30.25
4.	Dharmapuri	16.29	10.28	13.32	25.63	17.04	12.87	14.87	31.20
5.	Salem	13.87	12.67	13.29	32.67	14.34	14.74	14.53	40.24
6.	Periyar	15.61	14.91	15.26	37.13	15.93	16.47	16.20	41.84
7.	Coimbatore	15.51	14.96	15.24	37.94	15.88	16.04	15.95	40.94
8.	Madurai	11.86	11.87	11.86	37.04	12.42	13.55	12.97	41.08
9.	Tiruchirapalli	9.21	7.97	8.60	29.63	9.88	10.25	10.06	36.06
10.	Thanjavur	5.62	3.16	4.41	20.13	6.16	4.16	5.17	25.37
11.	Pudukkottai	7.93	5.35	6.66	19.71	8.92	8.25	8.59	29.41
12.	Ramanathapuram	9.39	10.00	9.69	30.08	10.20	12.77	11.47	38.34
13.	Tirunelveli	8.36	10.79	9.55	33.67	8.82	12.30	10.53	38.36
	Tamilnadu	10.14	8.51	9.34	27.85	10.78	10.40	10.59	33.53

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A, Social and Cultural Tables for Tamil Nadu.

2) Census of India, 1981, Part II-B, Primary Census Abstract for Tamil Nadu.

Table No.10

Selected Indices of Agrarian Economy, 1981

	Indices / Districts	Voutput/ Agricul- tural Worker	Voutput/ Rural Popula- tion	Irriga- tion hectare	Cropping- Intensity	Share of Inferior Cereals hectare	Percentage of Landless households	Ratio of Agricul- tural Labourers	Percentage of holdings < 0.5	Percentage of holdings < 1.0	Percentage of SC Population
1.	Chengalpattu	2174	640	79.4	1.33	5.8	54.81	1.40	62.44	80.36	26.21
2.	North Arcot	2354	784	48.00	1.18	16.00	42.03	0.91	43.10	68.22	19.89
3.	South Arcot	2125	730	54.00	1.27	19.80	40.49	1.00	53.52	74.48	25.97
4.	Dharmapuri	1227	463	25.8	1.19	45.50	30.96	0.51	37.54	59.48	13.86
5.	Salem	1745	655	34.00	1.12	29.50	50.45	0.95	35.45	59.54	19.84
6.	Periyar	2431	981	62.9	1.22	29.50	58.51	1.31	36.15	55.74	17.09
7.	Coimbatore	1913	733	48.6	1.12	40.40	65.06	1.93	18.85	38.43	16.97
8.	Madurai	1518	604	51.00	1.13	28.50	54.45	1.44	42.52	65.73	15.63
9.	Tiruchirapalli	1458	546	39.00	1.12	41.50	39.11	0.78	45.09	67.05	19.96
10.	Thanjavur	2713	867	72.00	1.61	0.70	54.00	1.86	48.72	71.40	23.36
11.	Pudukkottai	1612	509	53.90	1.07	10.90	23.52	0.37	62.73	81.14	16.70
12.	Ramanathapuram	1318	444	40.00	1.03	17.00	35.07	0.62	49.49	71.24	16.88
13.	Tirunelveli	1562	477	47.7	1.19	20.50	50.16	1.16	50.38	71.94	16.82
	Mean	1858	649	50.48	1.20	23.52	46.05	1.20	45.07	66.52	18.35

Source: 1) Data related to agrarian characteristics such as output, irrigation, cropping intensity, share of inferior cereals have been obtained from Season and Crop Report of Tamilnadu, 1980-81.

2) Data related to population characteristics such as agricultural workers, rural population and percentage of SC population have been obtained from Census of India, 1981, Part II-B. Primary Census Abstract for Tamil Nadu.

3) Data on landless households and total households have been called from Census of India, 1981, Part VIII-A and B(ii), Household Tables for Tamilnadu.

Table No.11

LFPRS of Women by Caste, 1981

Caste District \ State		Schedule Caste Main Workers	Schedule Caste Main and Marginal Workers	Other Caste Main Workers	Other Caste Main and Marginal Workers	Column 2- Column 4- Column 4	Column 3- Column 5- Column 5
1.	Chengalpattu	31.43	38.49	16.68	22.02	74.82	32.02
2.	North Arcot	34.09	40.33	22.74	29.75	49.96	35.54
3.	South Arcot	36.17	43.81	18.01	24.34	100.84	79.99
4.	Dharmapuri	31.34	37.19	24.40	29.89	28.14	24.45
5.	Salem	42.78	48.12	31.67	37.56	35.08	28.13
6.	Periyar	48.26	52.55	34.69	39.50	39.13	33.05
7.	Coimbatore	50.91	53.45	34.67	37.81	46.84	41.37
8.	Madurai	45.16	49.11	35.01	39.08	29.00	25.68
9.	Tiruchirapalli	38.77	45.19	22.63	29.07	71.34	55.43
10.	Thanjavur	40.24	48.93	12.44	16.36	223.36	199.15
11.	Pudukkottai	25.83	36.80	18.39	27.81	40.45	32.33
12.	Ramanathapuram	36.61	45.66	28.41	36.45	28.85	25.28
13.	Tirunelveli	45.12	50.36	30.83	35.37	46.36	42.38
	Tamilnadu	38.60	45.11	24.65	30.11	56.58	49.82

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part Social and Cultural Tables for Tamil Nadu.
2) Census of India, 1981, Part-IV a (vii) Social and Cultural Tables for Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe.

Note: Other caste refers to all castes except schedule caste and schedule tribe.

Table No.12

LFPRS of Children 5-14, by Caste, 1981

Caste / District	Schedule Caste				Other Caste				Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
	Main Workers		Main and Marginal		Main Workers		Main and Marginal		Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Column5	Column6	Column7	Column8
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
1. Chengalpattu	9.62	8.01	10.71	10.05	7.30	4.46	7.98	6.19	31.69	79.44	34.24	62.40
2. North Arcot	11.14	9.10	11.90	11.16	10.77	7.22	11.51	9.66	3.43	26.15	3.44	15.53
3. South Arcot	11.67	8.90	12.77	11.43	7.62	4.34	8.34	6.38	53.20	104.93	52.25	79.23
4. Dharmapuri	16.40	12.77	17.10	15.44	16.21	9.79	16.98	12.12	1.16	30.46	0.73	27.35
5. Salem	16.67	17.22	17.09	19.32	12.67	11.04	13.15	13.13	31.57	55.97	30.00	47.16
6. Periyar	24.78	22.73	25.26	24.32	13.12	12.86	13.38	14.41	88.84	76.76	88.78	68.73
7. Coimbatore	26.43	23.49	26.98	24.50	12.10	12.28	12.41	13.37	118.39	91.24	117.35	83.26
8. Madurai	14.32	14.98	14.89	16.73	11.22	11.10	11.78	12.78	27.58	34.95	26.45	30.89
9. Tiruchirapalli	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
10. Thanjavur	6.87	6.90	7.69	8.81	5.18	1.86	5.62	2.53	32.75	271.44	36.81	247.68
11. Pudukkottai	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
12. Ramanathapuram	11.76	14.00	13.00	17.20	8.76	8.95	9.45	11.61	34.24	56.36	37.52	48.16
13. Tirunelveli	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tamilnadu	12.88	11.76	13.71	13.86	9.39	7.69	9.98	9.54	37.25	52.91	37.40	45.35

Source: 1) Census of India, 1981, Part IV-A (SC/ST) Social and Cultural Tables, Table C-4

2) Census of India, 1981.

Note : Other caste refers to all castes except Schedule Caste and Schedule tribe.

ABSTRACT

The paper "Labour Force Participation of Women and Children in Rural Tamilnadu: An Analysis of the Inter-District Variability" explores the relavance of distress as determinant of labour force participation of women and children. Distress - the major determinant of labour force participation of women and children has three dimensions: a) level of income b) distribution of income and c) stability of income or earnings. Identification or classification of the three dimensions of distress offers a convenient framework for analysing the impact of various factors that determine labour force participation of women and children. Apart from factors related to distress, to capture the impact of sociological factors, percentage of schedule caste population in the total population has been introduced into the analysis.

The analysis of the paper indicates that distribution of income and stability in earnings are the major determinants of labour force participation of women and children. These results indicate the fallacy in relying solely on raising the level of income or general level of prosperity to eradicate distress. Thus the paper argues for redistribution of resources, particularly land, as the most suited policy measure to eradicate poverty and hence distress and distress induced labour force participation of women and children, particularly children.

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